

The Maine Coastal Beach Monitoring Program: Working for healthier swimming water in coastal Maine

- **What is the Maine Beach Program?**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) initiated the Beaches Environmental Assessment, Closure, and Health (BEACH) Program in response to the growing concern about public health risks posed by polluted coastal bathing beaches. In Maine, community-based groups will take water samples at coastal swim beaches for bacteria, an indicator of recreational water-borne illnesses. The data will be used by municipalities, state agencies and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

- **Why should municipalities/beach users be concerned?**

Scientific evidence documenting the rise of infectious diseases caused by microbial organisms in recreational waters continues to grow. The number of coastal beach closures reported every year in the US is also on the rise. To counteract this growing problem and to ensure public notification when they may be at risk of illness and disease, the EPA has established a national program to protect public health at the nation's beaches.

- **How will the Beach Program be implemented in Maine?**

Many steps are being taken to establish an effective procedure for monitoring the water quality of Maine's coastal swim beaches. They include:

- Gathering extensive information on individual beaches from municipalities;
- Surveying beach users to establish the extent of public knowledge and incidence of health problems related to swimming in coastal areas;
- Developing monitoring methods for coastal swim beaches; and
- Developing a public education and notification program.

- **What is the status of this program in 2003?**

In the State of Maine, the first phase of the project in 2002 focussed on a pilot program that included a select few of Maine's coastal swim beaches as a model for future monitoring. This year with a better structure in place, we will have a total of nine beaches being monitored.

- **Who should I contact if I have more questions?**

Todd Janeski
State Planning Office/Maine Coastal Program
38 State House Station
184 State St.
Augusta, ME 04333
p. 207.287.3261
800.662.4545

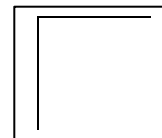


<http://www.state.me.us/spo/>

Esperanza Stancioff or Sarah Gladu
University of Maine Cooperative Extension
and Sea Grant
235 Jefferson Street
P.O. Box 309
Waldoboro, ME 04572
Phone: (207) 832-0343 or 1-800-244-2104
FAX 207-832-0377
email: esp@umext.maine.edu



Lee Doggett
Department of Environmental Protection
Land and Water Bureau
17 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0017
p. 207.287.3901
800.452.1942
www.state.me.us/dep



Clough Toppan
Department of Human Services
Maine Bureau of Health
11 State House Station
161 Capitol St.
Augusta, ME 04333
p. 207.287.8016



Matt Liebman
BEACH Program Coordinator
US EPA, Region 1
One Congress St. Ste. 1110 – CWQ
Boston, Massachusetts 02114
Phone (617) 918-1626
liebman.matt@epa.gov
www.epa.gov/ost/beaches



Additional project partners:



Maine Department of Marine Resources